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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FBI REVIEW COMPLETED

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

April 7, 1956

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
BY COURIER SERVICE

Mr. Allen W. Dulles
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Administration Building, Room 123
2430 E Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dulles:

It will be recalled that nine Soviet seamen from the Soviet tanker "Tuapse," were granted asylum in the United States during October, 1955.

Information has been previously furnished to you concerning the attempts of the Soviets in the United States to redefect the nine seamen through direct approaches and other means. The following additional information has been developed on five of these seamen, to wit:

Aleksandr Petrovich Shirin
Mikhail Pavlovich Shishin
Viktor Demyanovich Ryabenko
Nikolai Ivanovich Vaganov
Valentine Yakovlevich Lukashkov

The following information was developed on April 6, 1956, concerning the subjects' presence with Soviet officials at the Soviet United Nations Delegation Headquarters in New York City and their plans to return to the Soviet Union at 4 p.m., on April 7, 1956.

At 3:52 p.m., on April 6, 1956, Agents of our New York Office observed a group of approximately twelve individuals leaving Soviet United Nations Delegation Headquarters, 680 Park Avenue, New York City. This group included several young-looking individuals who resembled available photographs of some of the nine Soviet seamen. Our Agents recognized in

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this group Fedor F. Solomatin, Second Secretary of the Soviet Embassy, Washington, D. C., and Konstantin P. Ekimov, First Secretary of the Soviet United Nations Delegation. The group entered two automobiles of the Soviet United Nations Delegation bearing New York license numbers DPL 355 and DPL 19, respectively. The automobiles were surveilled to the Alien Tax Unit of the Internal Revenue Service located in midtown Manhattan. After remaining at this establishment a short period, the group returned to Soviet United Nations Delegation Headquarters.

It has been determined that on April 6, 1956, Nikolai Turkin, an employee of the Soviet United Nations Delegation made reservations for the above-captioned subjects and himself on Scandinavian Airlines Flight 902, departing New York International Airport at 4 p.m., on April 7, 1956. He subsequently added as an additional passenger for this flight Fedor F. Solomatin, Soviet official, mentioned hereinbefore. The destination of these individuals was reported to be Leningrad, USSR.

The following information further relates to this matter:

Subject, Aleksandr Petrovich Shirin, has been employed at a plant of the Clifton Paperboard Company, Clifton, New Jersey, on 3 p.m., to 11 p.m., shift. On April 5, 1956, at about 6:30 p.m., two unknown men appeared at the guard's office of the plant and asked to speak to Shirin. The latter was called out and met the two men on the sidewalk in front of the plant, where he spoke to them in Russian for about twenty minutes. He then returned to his work in the plant. At about 10 p.m., the two unknown men returned and they again asked to speak to Shirin. When apprised of this, Shirin reportedly stated "why don't they let me alone." He again met the men and talked to them for ten to twenty minutes. He returned to work thereafter where he remained until the conclusion of his shift at 11 p.m. He then left the plant with some fellow employees and visited at their residence in Garfield, New Jersey. They entered a tavern on the first floor at this residence and Shirin pulled out his wallet stating he had to call the FBI. When his fellow employees suggested that he do it the following day, Shirin remarked "tomorrow may

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be too late; they have already stolen (or taken, depending upon translation) one of my friends." Shirin then mentioned a word not understood by his fellow employees and he repeated in English "secret police." Shirin also used a phrase similar to "at the point of a gun." The fellow employees were not clear concerning the exact statements made by Shirin, but indicated that "at the point of a gun" might have been used as a figure of speech. He was urged by his fellow employees to stay at their residence overnight but he refused, stating that he would return the next day with his belongings. His fellow employees then took him to a bus stop where he could board a bus for New York City.

Subject, Mikhail Pavlovich Shishin, also an employee of the Clifton Paperboard Company was scheduled to work the 11 p.m., to 7 a.m., shift, but did not show up for work on April 6, 1956.

Subjects Nikolai Ivanovich Vaganov and Viktor Demyanovich Ryabenko failed to appear at their place of employment the Heldorf Manufacturing Company, Paterson, New Jersey, on the morning of April 6, 1956. A company employee who is acquainted with these individuals called at their residence, 156 Madison Street, Paterson, New Jersey, and found their room in disarray. There was a note left by the two individuals in the Russian language dated April 5, 1956, which translated read: "Uncle Vasya; Many thanks for the attention given us. We decided to return to the land of our birth and believe that we took the right step. We advise you to take this step also. With greetings Viktor and Nikolai." The landlord of the premises, Wassili Kowalew, advised that he was known to Ryabenko and Vaganov as "Uncle Vasya." Kowalew was not aware of any reason for the sudden departure of these individuals stating that Ryabenko had often expressed his distaste for conditions in Russia and had frequently stated that he would not return there.

Subject, Valentine Yakovlevich Lukashkov, who has been attending an English language course at Columbia University, New York City, and residing at the International House, 500 Riverside Drive, New York City, did not return to his residence on April 6, 1956.

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The four remaining seamen of this group reportedly have not been approached. Three of these seamen, Mikhail Vasilevich Ivankov-Nikolov, Victor Stephanovich Tatarnikov and Benedikt Pavlovich Yeremenko are presently in the Washington, D. C., area under the control of your Agency. The remaining seaman Victor Dmitrievich Soloviev was located and interviewed in New York City by representatives of your Agency and this Bureau. He claimed that no approach had been made to him to redefect.

This confirms the information orally furnished to your Agency during the evening of April 6, 1956.

On April 7, 1956, this Bureau was advised by the Department of Justice that a decision had been reached by the Department of State and your Agency to take no action to prevent the departure of the five seamen; further, that it had been agreed that inquiries should be made by the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the five seamen to determine whether they were voluntarily leaving the United States. The Department of Justice also advised that no action was necessary by this Bureau in this matter.

The Department of State has been advised of the foregoing.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

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